

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

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In re Patent Application of:  
Niel F. STARKSEN

Application No.: 10/656,797

Confirmation No.: 7101

Filed: September 4, 2003

Art Unit: 3734

For: DEVICES AND METHODS FOR CARDIAC  
ANNULUS STABILIZATION AND  
TREATMENT

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Examiner: K. Dowe

**AMENDMENT IN RESPONSE TO NON-FINAL OFFICE ACTION**

MS Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

This is in response to the non-final Office Action dated September 17, 2009, for which a response is due on December 17, 2009. Accordingly, this response is timely filed. A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is submitted concurrently herewith. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims, as amended, in light of the remarks presented herein are respectfully requested.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 11 of this paper.